

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L YAOUNDE 2707

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PINS, MOPS, EFIN, EADI, CM
SUBJECT: CONSULTATIONS ON RECOVERY EFFORT FOR ZAIRE

REFS: (A) STATE 137343 (B) YAOUNDE 2685 (C) YAOUNDE 2660
(D) YAOUNDE 2658 (E) STATE 134913

1. SUMMARY: EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT ON BALANCE INTER-AFRICAN
PEACEKEEPING FORCE FOR ZAIRE SUPPORTED BY WESTERN GOVERNMENTS
WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO GURC. END SUMMARY.

2. THE GENERAL SUBJECT OF AN INTER-AFRICAN PEACEKEEPING FORCE WAS
BROUGHT UP BY GENERAL SEMENGUE, INSPECTOR GENERAL AND CHAIRMAN
OF COORDINATION STAFF AND COL. ETONDE (NUMBER 1 AND 3 OFFICERS IN
CAMEROONIAN ARMY) IN CONVERSATION REPORTED REFTEL B. THEY WERE
OBVIOUSLY AWARE OF PROJECTED FORCE AND COMMITTED THAT BASIC
PROBLEMS WOULD BE WHO WOULD PAY THE BILLS AND FURNISH THE COMMON
EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING REQUIRED TO HAVE A TRULY INTEGRATED
FORCE. THEY DID NOT THINK MUCH OF SEPARATE NON-INTEGRATED
NATIONAL UNITS. HERE AGAIN, AS IN THEIR GENERAL DISCUSSION
ON ZAIRE, THEY THOUGHT USG SHOULD BE INVOLVED, BUT EXPRESSED
DOUBT THAT POST-VIETNAM MOOD OF CONGRESS AND AMERICAN PEOPLE
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WOULD PERMIT EFFECTIVE U.S. PARTICIPATION AT LEVEL THEY CONSIDERED
NECESSARY. BOTH SEMENGUE AND ETONDE OBSERVED THAT WHILE THEY
COULD UNDERSTAND THE MOTIVES OF SENGHOR AND HOUPHOUET IN
ASSOCIATING THEMSELVES WITH AN INTER-AFRICAN PEACEKEEPING
FORCE, THEY COULD NOT SEE THE ORDINARY SENEGALESE AND IVORIAN
FOOT SOLDIER WILLING TO DIE FOR MOBUTU. COMMENT: THESE ARMY
OFFICERS OBVIOUSLY NOT CONCERNED WITH POGONICBZ CONSIDERATIONS,

BUTMAINLY WITH THE PRACTICALITIES OF IMPLEMENTATION.

3. IN LATER CONVERSATION WITH COL. RIAC (REFTEL B) ON SAME SUBJECT HE STATED THAT HE DID NOT THINK GURC WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO PEACEKEEPING FORCE,BUT WOULD NOT OBJECT TO FORMATION OF SUCH A FORCE. HE ALSO SAID CRITICAL QUESTIONS WERE WHO WOULD FURNISH THE EQUIPMENT AND PAY THE BILLS.

4. REFTEL D POINTS TO ONE ALTERNATIVE A COUNTRY IS LIKELY TO CHOOSE WHEN UNABLE TO HANDLE INDEPENDENTLY ITS OWN SECURITY PROBLEMS. FOREIGN MINISTER DEUTCHA (REF TEL D) APPROVED OF CHAD'S CALLING ON FRANCE FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE. THEREFORE, THERE WOULD APPEAR ON THE SURFACE TO BE EVEN LESS DIFFICULTY IF REQUESTS FOR SECURITY ASSISTANCE ARE DIRECTED AT OTHER AFRICAN CUNTRIES.

5. THE THREE REASONS CAMEROON MIGHT HEDGE SUPPORT FOR AN INTER-AFRICAN PEACEKEEPING FORCE ARE NON-INTERFERENCE IN THE DOMESTIC AFFAIRS OF ANOTHER AFRICAN COUNTRY, THE PROBLEM OF THE VIABILITY OF SUCH A FORCE AND ITS EFFECT ON THE OAU (REFTEL C). THE FIRST QUESTION IS DIRECTED AT THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE OCCASION. WHILE THE GURC WOULD PROBABLY FAVOR USE OF AN INTER-AFRICAN PEACE FORCE IN THE PROPOSED ZAIRE RECOVERY EFFORT ANDPHERHAPS EXTENSION TO CHAD AND OGADEN AND EVEN ZIHGABWE AND NAMIBIA, THEY MIGHT HAVE TROUBLE WITH POLITICAL SITUATIONS LIKE ERITREA, ANGOLA AND WESTERN SAHARA. BASICALLY, WHAT MIGHT DISTURB THE CONFIDENTIAL

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GURC IS THE PRECEDENT THAT THIS ACTION SETS AND THE DIFFICULTY IN DEFINING THE TERMS AN CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH IT MIGHT BE USED IN THE FUTURE. FOR CERTAIN PURPOSES THE GURC MIGHT EVEN PREFER TO SEE A QUICK AND EFFECTIVE FRENCH OPERATION TO CONTAIN AN EXTERNAL AGGRESSOR RATHER THAN GETTING BOGGED DOWN BY A HODGEPODGE OF NATIONAL FORCES ON SEMI-PERMANENT GARRISON DUTY, WITH THE ATTENDANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR HARRASSMENT OF THE LOCAL CIVILIAN POPULATION. FINALLY THE QUESTION OF WHO DECIDES WHERE THE FORCE SHOULD BE DEPLOYED COULD ADD TO THE DIVISIVENESS WITHIN THE OAU AND END UP WEAKENING RATHER THAN STRENGTHENING THAT ORGANIZATION--A SITUATION WHICH THE GURC DOES NOT FAVOR (REF TEL C). IN FACT, THE OAU COULD VERY WELL BECOME MORE OPENLY SPLIT BETWEEN RADICAL STATES WHO FAVOR USE OF CUBAN SURROGATES AND MODERATES WHO COHTER WITH AFRICAN TROOPS BACKED BY NATO MEMBERS.

6 INCONCLUSION

WHILE THE CONCEPT OF AN INTER-AFRICAN PEACEKEEPING FORCE FOR ZAIRE MIGHT BE RECEIVED BY THE GURC WITH SOME RESERVATIONS, ON BALANCE WE BELIEVE THEY WOULD SUPPORT IT, THOUGH PERHAPS NOT PUBLICLY. AND IF THE USG WERE TO MAKE A COMMITMENT TO THE FORCE, THEN THE GURC WOULD PROBABLY WELCOME THIS CONCRETE DEMONSTRATION THAT WE ARE NOT GOING TO STAND BACK AND

LET THOSE SUPPORTING DESTABILIZATION GO UNCHALLENGED.
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